

**Forest Management Advisory Committee  
Meeting Summary  
January 04, 2006  
Michigan United Conservation Clubs Conference Room  
2101 Wood St., Lansing**

**Attendees:**

**FMAC Members:** Steven Arwood, Joel Blohm, William (Bill) Bobier, Lynne Boyd, William (Bill) Cook, Leland Crawford, John Fowler, Susan Holben, Mark Janke, Desmond Jones, , Frank Ruswick, Warren Suchovsky, Sam Washington, Gordon Wenk, Anne Woiwode, Leanne Marten (committee advisor), Kerry Gray (staff support).

Thomas Dunn, Margaret (Peg) Gale, Daniel Keathley and William (Bill) Manson were absent.

**Other Attendees:** George Berghorn (Michigan Forest Products Council), Erin McDonough (MUCC-Delegate), Todd Scott (Michigan Mountain Biking Association), Stephen Shine (MDA), David Wright (Michigan Forest Association)

**Welcome**

Lynne Boyd welcomed FMAC members and guests.

Additions to the agenda:

January 12 Natural Resource Commission Meeting

Bill Cook's discussion of GAFMPs issues raised in December 19 email

Upcoming meeting dates

**Meeting Summary**

Steve Arwood motioned to approve December 7 FMAC meeting summary. Warren Suchovsky seconded.

**January 12 Natural Resource Commission Meeting**

Boyd extended an invitation to the January 12 Natural Resource Commission (NRC) meeting held at the Holiday Inn in Muskegon. There will be an announcement about Forest Certification at 4:15 p.m. Please let Boyd know if you are planning on attending.

For those members interested in the DNR budget issues, the NRC Finance Commission will be meeting at 10:30 a.m. to discuss DNR budget issues.

**Bill Cook's GAFMPs issues email**

Cook described the need for the FMAC to get in writing the reason(s) why the committee is writing the Generally Accepted Forest Management Practices (GAFMPs). Is it just due to the Right to Forest Legislation or are there other reasons?

Cook likes the guidelines that Wisconsin created because they create caveats on what the guidelines are and are not. He suggested that FMAC do this when creating the GAFMPs. Cook asked for input from the committee on what they thought of this idea.

A discussion developed on the task of creating the GAFMPs and the Right to Forest legislation that is the impetus behind their creation.

- Arwood asked what the management guidelines were trying to protect? Conservation of forest resource? Values of the forest?
- Anne Woiwode described her opinion on the Right to Forest Act. The primary purpose of the Right to Forest legislation is to protect forest landowners who are engaging in forest practices from being sued by their neighbors. The Act does not provide for good forest management practices but rather to set standards to prevent neighbor litigation. There is no regulatory element in the Act, if a forest landowner does not follow GAFMPs they will open themselves up to potential litigation.
- Cook stated that PNIF owners are already vulnerable to lawsuits at this time, so little, if anything, is lost by developing GAFMPs and much stands to be gained
- Bill Bobier suggested that the GAFMPs be kept simple.
- Boyd asked what guidance should be provided to landowners, who do not want to get a management plan, to help protect them from litigation?
- Boyd agreed with Cook that what guidelines are not, should be included in the GAFMPs
- Cook has had discussions with private forest landowners and has found that some are afraid to do any cutting on their property for fear of what their neighbors will think. The GAFMPs may help ease private forest owners fears and better allow them to do forest management activities on their property.
- Boyd agreed with Cook that the biggest issue the DNR faces is the visual management issues, especially when clearcutting an area.
- Cook proposed that there be multiple ways for a forest landowner to meet the GAFMPs.
  - If a landowner has a forest management plan created by a natural resource professional they would meet GAFMPs
  - If a landowner has land under a certification program (e.g. Tree Farm System, Forest Stewardship Council, Sustainable Forestry Initiative) they would meet GAFMPs.
  - If a landowner has neither, then they can follow the GAFMPs developed by the FMAC and approved by the NRC.
- Meeting attendee David Wright from the Michigan Forest Association provided his opinion that there are millions of acres held by non-industrial private forest (NIPF) landowners that are not currently being managed. By providing regulations/guidelines it will make it even less likely that they will create a forest management plan. Mr. Wright was concerned that the guidelines would cause a hurdle to good forest management practices for NIPF landowners.
- Cook countered that many NIPF landowners typically do not know what good forest management is and that by making the GAFMPs available it would provide them with some guidance. He did not see their creation as a hurdle but rather as a vehicle to encourage more and better forest management.
- Cook suggested that at some point the FMAC will need to move from the Right to Forest Act compliance into creating a public education tool for good forest management practices.

- FMAC members agreed that they would present to the NRC multiple ways that a forest landowner could meet the GAFMPs. All methods must be approved by NRC.
  - Have a forest management plan created by a natural resource professional. The DNR will create the language for this method to meet GAFMPs . Boyd will have it for the February 8 meeting.
  - For those forest landowners that do not have a forest management plan, the creation of GAFMPs (or the core essentials) that a landowner must follow to be covered by the Right to Forest Act when doing forest management practices.
    - Each of the four working groups that were identified in the December 7 meeting will need to provide a working list of GAFMPs for the topic area they have been assigned by the February 8 meeting.
- Working Groups:
  1. **Visual management**- George Berghorn, Michigan Forest Products Council will serve as Chair, Susan Holbern, Thomas Dunn, Warren Suchovsky, Jim Bielecki (DNR)
  2. **Noise/Dust**- Bill Bobier, Warren Suchovsky, DNR Unit Manager (Boyd to provide name)
  3. **Removal of vegetation**- Steve Arwood will serve as Chair, Desmond Jones, Anne Woiwode, Leland Crawford, Erin McDonough (MUCC), Tom Stone (DNR)
  4. **Chemicals\*\***- Anne Woiwode, Jim Ferris (DNR), MDA's Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division staff

### **Public Comment**

Todd Scott Director of the Michigan Mountain Biking Association (MMBA) provided comment. MMBA is one of the largest mountain biking advocacy groups in the world with 2000 members. Michigan is ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in the country for mountain biking. The MMBA helps to build and maintain trails for multiple recreational uses. The top issue that Mr. Scott sees impacting Michigan's State Forests is the lack of funding. Since users do not have to pay a fee to use the trail system there is no DNR operating funds to maintain the trails.

### **Top Issues Facing Michigan's Forest Resource**

Kerry Gray described the process of how the list of the top issues facing Michigan's forests was created. The list was generated at the first FMAC meeting on October 8, 2005, when members provided issues they saw impacting Michigan's forests, both short-term and long-term. Following the meeting, similar items in the list were grouped together and a list of 21 items was sent out to the FMAC committee members for their ranking. Each committee member was to rank their top 5 short-term and top 5 long-term issues. Gray then compiled committee member rankings and the resulting document was in front of the members.

A discussion about creating a prioritization list developed. It was decided that FMAC members need more information before they felt comfortable about organizing and

prioritizing their top issues. They are interested in having presentations about the industry's perspective on Michigan's forests, economics (both industry and public), cooperative projects between government, private landowners and businesses. Committee members suggested the Clay Lake Plains Project, ecosystem planning in the U.P. Cook stated that these projects were not really cooperative efforts between private landowners and businesses. The committee will table organization/prioritization of the issues to a future meeting.

### **Update on Michigan Forest Legislation**

The legislation is still in committee. The DNR will have an analysis of the bills, once it is available, Boyd will forward to FMAC members.

### **New Business**

None

### **Next Meeting**

February 8 meeting will be from 1p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) offices in Lansing.

- Agenda Items for Feb. 8 meeting
  - Working Group lists/Right to Forest Legislation (max. 2 hours)
  - Industry's perspective/economic impacts (1 hour)- Crawford/Berghorn
  - Michigan United Conservation Clubs private landowner and forestry initiative

### **Upcoming meetings**

- March 8 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at MUCC offices in Lansing
- April 5 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. – location TBD (Leanne Marten check availability of USFS offices)
- May 3 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. – location TBD

Meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.